

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 41-50 are pending in the present application. The present Amendment adds Claims 41-50 and cancels Claims 1-2, 4-7, 9-36 and 38-40 without prejudice or disclaimer. Additions to the claims find support in the disclosure as originally filed. Thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-36 and 38-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph; Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-36 and 38-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite; Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 15, 22, 25-27, 29-31, 35, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Stefik et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,233,684, herein “Stefik”) in view of Schneck et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,933,498, herein “Schneck”) and Perlman (U.S. Patent No. 6,363,480); Claims 4-5, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 28 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Stefik, Schneck Perlman in further view of Chou et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,337,357, herein “Chou”); and Claims 11-14 and 18-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Stefik and Schneck.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-36 and 38-40 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims have been cancelled by the present response and thus the rejections under §112, first and second paragraphs, are moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs, be withdrawn.

With respect to the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 15, 22, 25-27, 29-31, 35, 38 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Stefik, Schneck and Perlman, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims have been cancelled by the present response and thus the

rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 15, 22, 25-27, 29-31, 35, 38 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Stefik, Schneck and Perlman, be withdrawn.

Moreover, with regard to the rejections of Claims 4-5, 9-10, 11-14, 16-17, and 18-21, 23-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over various combinations of Stefik, Schneck, Perlman and Chou, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are also cancelled and thus the rejection of these claims is also moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the §103(a) rejections of Claims 4-5, 9-10, 11-14, 16-17, and 18-21, 23-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over various combinations of Stefik, Schneck, Perlman and Chou, be withdrawn.

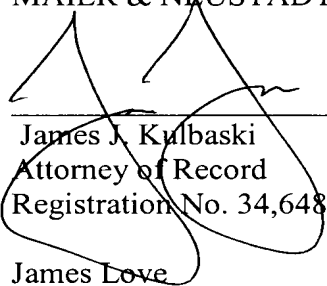
In addition, the newly added Claims 41-50 patentably distinguish over the previously cited Stefik, Schneck, Perlman and Chou references. This is the case, at least, due to the feature claimed in independent Claims 41 and 42 of an enciphering unit configured to generate an enciphered data by subjecting data to an enciphering process such that the enciphered data is decipherable by said image forming apparatus but is not decipherable by said terminal apparatus when a request for said data is received from said terminal apparatus, a feature not described or suggested in any of the above noted cited references.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 41 and 42, and claims depending respectfully therefrom, patentably distinguish over Stefik, Schneck, Perlman and Chou considered alone or in combination.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 41-50 is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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